Irregularities in voters' lists

*210. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the names of a large number of legitimate voters were removed from the voters' lists and thus deprived of casting votes in Assembly elections in various States; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) The Election Commission has intimated that it is not a fact that the names of large number of legitimate voters were removed from voters' lists and thus deprived of casting votes in Assembly elections in various States. However, some complaints about irregularities in the electoral rolls were received by the Commission and some were made before it. These complaints were investigated through Observers and other administrative machinery entrusted with the work of revision of electoral rolls and appropriate action was taken to rectify the rolls, wherever required.

Illegal quarrying of iron ore in Karnataka

*211. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of large scale illegal quarrying of iron ore in Karnataka;

(b) whether it is also a fact that large-scale use of young children in both the legal and illegal quarries and the large-scale permanent damage on the environment by the unrelenting quarrying in these regions; and

(c) the steps Government are taking to regulate such exploitation of the nation's natural resources and regulating these mining activities in other areas like child labour and amenities for labour etc.?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) Instances of illegal mining of minerals, including iron ore, in the State of Karnataka have come to the notice of the Central Government.

(b) As per available information, there is no reported instance of child labour in the legal mining leases, where it is necessary to obtain clearance

under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and Forest Conservation Act, 1980 and an approved mining plan, including mine closure plan for systematic rehabilitation and resettlement of mines. Some instances of illegal mines employing child labour have come to the notice of the Government. Illegal mining is done manually with damage to the sub-surface environment.

(c) States being the owners of minerals are obligated to prevent illegal mining. Further, the Central Government has empowered the State Governments to frame Rules for prevention of illegal mining, storage and transportation of illegally mined minerals, regular monitoring by the Government on a quarterly basis and regular inspection of mines under the Mineral Conservation and Development Rules, 1988 and Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986.

Oversight Committee for reservation

*212. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESORUCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether an Oversight Committee was constituted to go into the question of reservation for Other Backward Classes in the educational institutions without disturbing the existing opportunities available for non-reserved category (general category) of students;

(b) if so, the percise terms of reference of the Committee; and

(c) whether the question of identification of persons/candidates falling in creamy layer groups has been referred to the Committee; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b) An Oversight Committee has been constituted to draw up a time-bound road map for implementing reservation in admission for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes/Other Backward Classes in educational institutions under the purview of the Central Government from the academic session commencing in 2007.